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## Senate

(Legislative day of Tuesday, July 19, 2011)

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, author of liberty, to You we lift our hearts in prayer. Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light; protect us by Your might, great God our King.

Give to our lawmakers the wisdom to know the role they should play in keeping freedom's holy light bright. As they seek to be responsible stewards of their calling, keep them from the paths that lead to ruin. May the words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts be acceptable to You.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, July 20, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,  
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour. The majority will control the first half and the Republicans the final half. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the military construction appropriations bill. There will be a rollcall vote at noon on that matter in relation to the Vitter amendment. There are four other amendments pending. We hope to complete action on this bill today. We will notify all Senators when the votes will occur.

### DEBT DEFAULT

Mr. REID. Madam President, there is a fundamental principle we have to focus on in the Senate, and I think we have focused on it; that is, we cannot default on our debt. We have 11 or 12 days until that crucial time comes. We have a number of plans that are being talked about here. We have a path forward in the Senate, we believe. There is the Gang of 6, which reported some encouraging news yesterday. We have President Obama's grand plan that has been talked about a lot.

So now we return to the roots of what this country is all about; that is, our constitutional form of government. The Founding Fathers uniquely—when they finally figured out a way to do the Constitution, the breakthrough was in June of 1787, the so-called Grand Compromise, when a member of the Con-

stitutional Convention from Connecticut came up with the idea of a bicameral legislature. No one had ever thought about that before, that we would have a system of government with three branches—executive, judicial, and legislative. No one had ever considered having anything other than a parliamentary form of government.

But our Founding Fathers came up with a new idea, and that new idea was to have within the legislative branch of government two Houses; one based strictly on population and one based on the same number of Senators from each State. That took care of the big problem they had with New York—big, massive New York, with a lot of area and lots of people—and little, tiny Rhode Island—not much area and not many people.

The reason I say we return to our roots is we are not going to be able to do the fundamental principle that guides this country in the last 11 or 12 days of this legislative session; that is, we cannot default on our debt. We in the Senate can have the greatest ideas in the world, but if they are not accepted in the House we cannot extend the debt ceiling, which we have to do.

So now we await the House of Representatives. With our bicameral form of legislature, that is what we must do. We know they know time is of the essence. We know all of the partisanship that has been shown in the House of Representatives, including their spending so much time on this plan they call cap, cut, and balance—which others have called cut, cap, and destroy Medicare, and all the other names this program has been given—and we have to get now where we work on something that is important and has an opportunity to pass.

Everyone knew, the Republican leadership knew that did not stand a

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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